Inter-city rivalry and the epigraphic habit in the Veneto and Campania

1. Why (and how) do Este and Padua differ?

"One striking feature of this process of urbanisation, however, is that there are strong local differences, especially between the two neighbouring but competing centres of Padua and Este, in the details of urban layout and organisation, forms of funerary commemoration and material culture, and other cultural indicators such as the form of alphabet… the fact that cultural differences are emphasised most strongly in the two cities which are most powerful and also adjacent to each other suggests that this is reinforced by processes of competition and peer polity interaction." (Lomas 2011)

"Este innova e Padova conserva" (Fogolari and Prosdocimi 1988)
>   (1) Este has two-part names already in the oldest inscriptions
>   (2) The oldest Atestine funeral inscriptions have lots of information; Este then innovates a "dry and stereotypical" basic formula
>   (3) The nominative *–ios* goes to *–is* at Padova, but *–ios > -is > -s* at Este

**2. Introduction to Venetic**

2.2 Language

- Language of the Veneto and Friuli in modern-day Italy and some nearby regions of modern Austria and Slovenia
- Usually divided into "Euganean" and "Carnic" varieties
- Originally thought to be related to Illyrian and/or Messapic, but in 1940s connection to Italic was put forward.

- If the main criterion for inclusion in "Italic" is the treatment of the voiced aspirates, then Venetic does seem to be Italic (and perhaps closer to Latin than to Oscan-Umbrian).
- Some phonetic features: conservation of $*p$, in contrast to Celtic; initial $*b^h *d^h$ → /f/ and $*g^h$ → /h/, as in Latin and Oscan-Umbrian; medial $*b^h$ and $*d^h$ become /b/ and /d/, as in Latin; labiovelars $*k^w$ → /kv-/ and $*g^w$ → /v-/.
- List of all isoglosses and possible isoglosses in Lejeune (1974: 165ff)

2.3 Alphabet

- The Venetic alphabet is written right-to-left, and is adapted from the Etruscan alphabet, with the reintroduction of Greek letters in some instances
- The some letters of the alphabet vary between the different cities where Venetic was used, but most of the letter shapes are similar.
- The most distinctive aspect of the Venetic alphabet is its system of syllabic punctuation: general principle is that any letter which contravenes the CV syllable structure is marked.
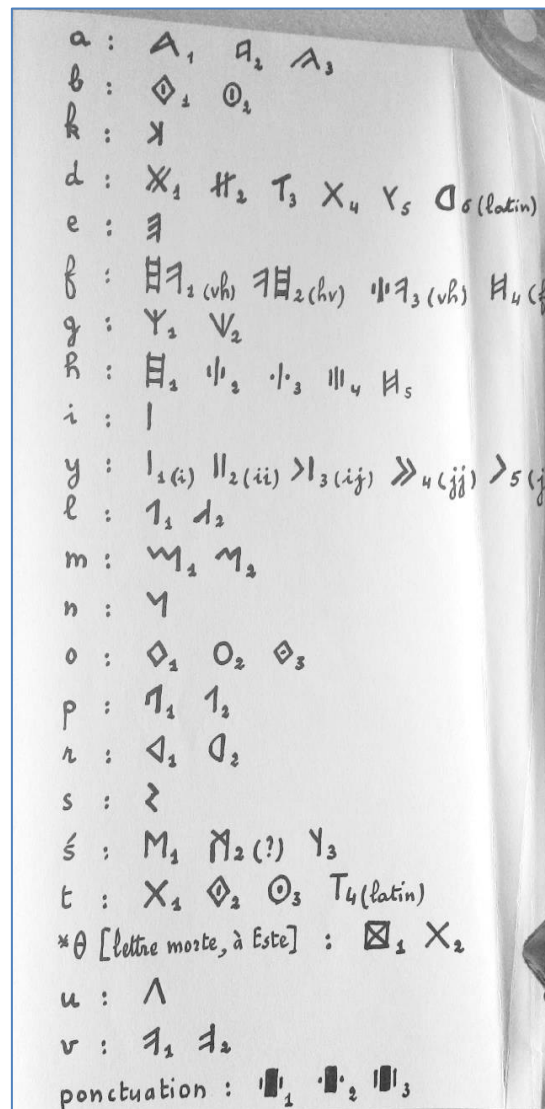
3. Variation in the Venetic epigraphic habit

3.1 <T> and <D>

	Notation of /t/	Notation of /d/
Este	<X> (t 1)	<Z> (d 1)
Vicenza	<X> (t 1)	<T> (d 3)
Padua	<θ> (t 2/3)	<X> (d 4)
Lagole and Monte Pore	<X> (t 1)	<Z> (d 2)
Valle di Cadore	<X> (t 1)	<Y> (d 5)
Carinthia	<X> (t 1)	<D> (d 6?)
Friuli	<T> (t 4?)	?
Carso	<X> (t 1)	?

4. Funerary monuments

- Shape (cippus at Este; decorated stele or ciottolone at Padua)
- Iconography (undecorated at Este; decorated at Padua)
- Number of women commemorated (Este has 31m, 19f, 1m+f; Padua has 19m, 3f, 1m+f)

- BUT there are considerable overlaps, e.g. in the use of ceramic urns
- They are also performing a similar function – probably marking groups of graves (family groups?) rather than individual burials. No one knows exactly what the ciottolone markers are for though (fun theories include: boundary stones, markers for those lost at sea, etc).

Este

Padua

4.1 Funerary formula by city

Este:

> Es 4 (Este, 475-350 BC?)
> **.e.go vo.l.tiiomno.i. iuva.n.tiio.[i.]**
> *I (am) for Voltiomnos Iuvantios*

Padua:

> Pa 2 (Padua, fifth century BC)
> **ple.i.ve.i.gno.i. kara.n.mniio.i. e.kupetari.s. e.go**
> *For Pleiveignos Karanmnios ekupetaris I (am)*

Type A: **Nominative pronoun (pN) + deceased in dative (DD)**

Type B: [Optional curator in nominative (CN) +] **deceased in dative (DD)** [+ optional relationship (R) or tomb in accusative (TA)]

Type C: **Deceased in nominative (DN)** [+ optional curator in genative (CG)][+ optional tomb in nominative (TN), relationship (R), age]

Type D: **Deceased in dative (DD) + ekvopetaris** [+ optional nominative pronoun (pN)]

Este: Type A (stone), B and C (mostly ceramic urns)
Padua: Type D (stone), B (mostly ceramic urns)
Vicenza: Type C, with some variation

4.2 Points to note

- There is clear variation in the use of the pronoun referring to the monument, including the word order – at Este the pronoun is usually fronted
- There is variation in the case of the name of deceased, although dative is the most common everywhere
- The word **ekupetaris** is a more consistent element of funerary markers on stone at Padua than at Este

4.2.1 An aside – the meaning of .e.kupetari.s.

- Main arguments summarised by Marinetti (2003)
- It has been argued to be a word referring to the gravestone, or an epithet of the deceased. From context, it looks like a nominative agreeing with the pronoun **ego**, and therefore should refer to the grave.
- First element pretty uncontroversially linked to Venetic **.e.kvo.n.** (acc.), Latin *equus* "horse".
- Second element has been linked to *pet-* "fly", Gk. πέτρα "rock" and (Marinetti's new suggestion) *pot-/pet-* "lord".
- Explanation of "horse-rock" suggests its use started with the stones decorated with horse-based imagery and then spread
- Conway suggested it simply meant "charioteer", but it does not always go with charioteer imagery, and can also appear with women's names
- Marinetti's alternative "horse-lord" suggests a social class similar to "eques" – would be convenient if we could make this agree with the deceased, but she argues that the word is an adjective means "equestrian" formula is something like "For X (an) equestrian (grave am) I".

4.3 Exceptions to the formulae

- Oldest inscriptions (*Es 122 in no one clear alphabet)
- Inscriptions in the "opposite" alphabet (Es 21, in Paduan alphabet)
- On unusual objects (*Es 121, on a bronze tripod)
- Weird for no reason? (Es 79)

4.4 Romanisation

- Padua and Este have different reactions to 'Romanisation' and the increasing use of Latin
- Padua retains its striking iconography; there are also plenty of bi-version texts
- Este abandons cippus form after 150 BC; urn inscriptions are usually in Latin after this point

5. Dedications

Este – bronze tablet

Este – pedestal

5.1 Differences to note
- The whole pattern of sanctuaries is completely different
- The deities are different – note in particular the goddess (of writing?) Reitia at Este
- The objects dedicated are different – very few inscribed dedications at Padua; many more at Este, where inscribed and non-inscribed bronze tablets, styluses and pedestals are common
- Many more women are attested as dedicators at Este

5.2 Dedicatory formula by city
- These are more variable, and also harder to compare because of the lack of evidence from Padua
- But again we see the use of fronted pronouns at Este and not Padua
- There is also variation in the verb of dedicating from place to place

- Type 1   **mego** + **donasto/doto** + NAME:nom + DIVINE:dat (+ NAME:dat)
  (+ circumstances)
- Type 1b   **vdan** + **donasto/doto** + NAME:nom + DIVINE:dat (+ **mego**)
  (+ circumstances)
- Type 1c   NAME:nom + **donasto/doto** (+ DIVINE:dat/acc) (+ circumstances)
  (+ **mego**)
- Type 1d   NAME:nom
- Type 2   NAME:nom (+DIVINE:dat) (+**vhagsto**)
- Type 3   NAME:nom + **donasto** (+ DIVINE?)

6. Overview

- There is city-by-city variation in funerary and dedicatory formulae in Euganean Venetic
- Not clear that any of this is real linguistic variation
- It appears to be stylistic variation
- It may be part of the systematic difference in epigraphic habit which has already been identified as important in this region

7. Consequences

7.1 Does this affect other regions?
- Another region where we might see cultural elite competition would be Campania, with Naples and Cumae only 25 km apart, and Capua about 40 km from both.

- Both Naples and Cumae were founded as "Greek" cities – why did Naples manage to hold onto this identity not only throughout the first millennium BC, but well into the Roman Imperial period?
- The traditional story is that Cumae's "Greekness" ended with invasion by Oscan-speaking Samnites in 421 or 420 BC and the expulsion of the Greeks (Livy 4.44; Diodorus Siculus 12.76; Strabo 5.4.4), but we have little evidence of this other than literary tradition.

  - Diodorus Siculus 12.76.4
    περὶ δὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς χρόνους κατὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν Καμπανοὶ μεγάλῃ δυνάμει στρατεύσαντες ἐπὶ Κύμην ἐνίκησαν μάχῃ τοὺς Κυμαίους καὶ τοὺς πλείους τῶν ἀντιταχθέντων κατέκοψαν.
    προσκαθεζόμενοι δὲ τῇ πολιορκίᾳ καὶ πλείους προσβολὰς ποιησάμενοι κατὰ κράτος εἷλον τὴν πόλιν. διαρπάσαντες δ' αὐτὴν καὶ τοὺς καταληφθέντας ἐξανδραποδισάμενοι τοὺς ἱκανοὺς οἰκήτορας ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπέδειξαν.

    "In the course of this year in Italy the Campanians advanced against Cyme with a strong army, defeated the Cymaeans in battle, and destroyed the larger part of the opposing forces. And settling down to a siege, they launched a number of assaults upon the city and took it by storm. They then plundered the city, sold into slavery

the captured prisoners, and selected an adequate number of their own citizens to settle there."

- Strabo 5.4.4
πρότερον μὲν οὖν ηὐτύχει ἥ τε πόλις καὶ τὸ Φλεγραῖον καλούμενον πεδίον, ἐν ᾧ τὰ περὶ τοὺς Γίγαντας μυθεύουσιν οὐκ ἄλλοθεν, ὡς εἰκός, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκ τοῦ περιμάχητον τὴν γῆν εἶναι δι᾽ ἀρετήν, ὕστερον δ᾽ οἱ Καμπανοὶ κύριοι καταστάντες τῆς πόλεως ὕβρισαν εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πολλά· καὶ δὴ καὶ ταῖς γυναιξὶν αὐτῶν συνῴκησαν αὐτοί. ὅμως δ᾽ οὖν ἔτι σῴζεται πολλὰ ἴχνη τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ τῶν νομίμων.

  "At first this city [Cyme] was highly prosperous, as well as the Phlegraean plain, which mythology has made the scene of the adventures of the giants, for no other reason, as it appears, than because the fertility of the country had given rise to battles for its possession. Afterwards, however, the Campanians becoming masters of the city, inflicted much injustice on the inhabitants, and even violated their wives. Still, however, there **remain numerous traces of the Grecian taste, their temples, and their laws**."

- Livy 4.44
  eodem anno a Campanis Cumae, quam Graecitum urbem tenebant, capiuntur.
  "In the same year, Cumae, at that time held by the Greeks, was captured by the Campanians."

- cf. Paestum, supposedly "conquered" by the Lucanians in the fourth century BC – which is archaeologicall implausible.

- We also know that there was a large Oscan-speaking population at Naples, both from literary and epigraphic sources.
- Was the language difference that emerged in the fifth-century BC more about elite compeition in an increasingly urbanised environment, rather than population change?

- Could the ideal of local elite competition also provide (part of) an explanation for the ostentatious change to Latin at Cumae in 180 BC (Livy 40.43.1)?
- Cumae has a very different reaction to Romanisation to its neighbours – in Naples there is a retention of Greek formulae and a growth in bi-version inscriptions rather than a switch to Latin (see Adams 2003: 401-2 for some examples).
- Could the second-century Veneto provide a parallel for second-century Cumae?

7.2 Can we trust Greco-Roman descriptions of regional identities?

- This point has been made elsewhere on the basis of the variation in the material culture and epigraphic habit in the Veneto
- Many scholars are now suspicious of language = people (in the same way as pots = people)

- Ancient descriptions of the Veneti as one 'people' or 'tribe' become suspect when cities where keen to emphasise their differences from their neighbours
- This chimes with what we know about the other communities of Italy (apart from the idea of 'Greekness', which did exist)

- References to the Veneti:
  - Iliad 2.851-2 [reference to horses]; Alcman fr. 1.91; Herodotus 1.196 [custom of auctioning off their daughters in order of beauty]; Euripides Hippolytus 229-23 [reference to horses]; Polybius 2.17 [like Celts but with different language]; Strabo 5.1.4-9 [suggesting they are either Celts or are descended from the Paphlagonian Veneti]; Pliny HN 3.130; Livy 1.1 [descent from the Paphlagonian Veneti].
  - Polybius 2.17
    "But the district along the shore of the Adriatic was held by another very ancient tribe called Veneti, in customs and dress nearly allied to Celts, but using quite a different language, about whom the tragic poets have written a great many wonderful tales."
  - Livy 1.1
    "Antenor, with a company of Eneti who had been expelled from Paphlagonia in a revolution and were looking for a home and a leader —for they had lost their king, Pylaemenes, at Troy —came to the inmost bay of the Adriatic. There, driving out the Euganei, who dwelt between the sea and the Alps, the Eneti and Trojans took possession of those lands. And in fact the place where they first landed is called Troy, and the district is therefore known as Trojan, while the people as a whole are called the Veneti."

- Possible references to communities in Venetic epigraphy: **altnos** (deity?), **patavnos**, **graikos**, **heno[--]tos** (deity), **venetkens**. The word **venetkens** (in a contextless inscription of perhaps C5th-3rd BC) may suggest there was a regional identity, but only one attestation. Venetic also has the word **teuta**, as in Oscan/Umbrian

8. Conclusions

- Others have already suggested that competition is important in Venetic epigraphy – we can push this theory even further.
- Competition seems more helpful than the idea of Este as innovative.
- The idea of inter-city rivalry may be a helpful one for explaining epigraphic and linguistic differences between cities in other reasons.
- The strength of the city identity in the Veneto (and elsewhere) warns us against accepting the Roman picture of regional identities.

9. Selected references

B. d'Agostino, F. Fatta, V. Malpede (2005) *Cuma: le fortificazioni. 1, Lo scavo 1994-2002*. Naples.

G. Fogolari and A. Prosdocimi (1988) *I Veneti Antichi: Lingua e cultura*. Padua.

F. Fratta (2002) "Per una rilettura del sistema di fortificazioni di Cuma" in B. d'Agostino and A. d'Andrea (eds.) *Cuma: Nuove forme di intervento per lo studio del sito antico*. Naples. 21-74.

M. Lejeune (1974) *Manuel de la langue vénète*. Heidelberg.

K. Lomas (2007) "Writing boundaries: literacy and identity in the ancient Veneto" in Lomas, Whitehouse and Wilkins (eds.) *Literacy and the State in the Ancient Mediterranean*. London. 149-169.

K. Lomas (2011) "Communicating Identities in Funerary Iconography: the Inscribed Stelae of Northern Italy" in Lomas, Gleba and Horsnaes (eds.) *Communicating Identity in Italic Iron Age Communities*. Oxford. 7-25.

K. Lomas (2012) "Space, boundaries and the representation of identity in the Veneto, c. 600-400 BC" in Lomas, Cifani, Stoddart (eds.) *Landscape, Ethnicity and Identity in the Archaic Mediterranean Area.* Oxford. 187-206.

A. Marinetti (2003) "Il 'signore del cavallo' e i riflessi istituzionali dei dati di lingua. Venetica ekupetaris." in G. Cresci Marrone and M. Tirelli (eds.) *Produzioni, merci e commerci in Altino preromana e romana*. Rome. 143-160.

G.B. Pellegrini and A.L. Prosdocimi (1967) *La lingua venetica*. Padua.